



Republic of **BOTSWANA**

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Democracy, Development, Self-reliance and Unity.

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First enrolment for 2nd university in 2009

18 September, 2006

SEROWE - The first enrolment for the Botswana International University of Science and Technology to be constructed in Palapye has been moved to 2009.

The countrys second university was initially scheduled to start operating next year but the Assisant Minister of Education said this would be impossible because putting up such a big structure requires intense consultations and preparations.

Moggie Mbaakanyi said this on Thursday when addressing a kgotla meeting in Serowe and later the ongoing full meeting of the Central District Council on progress regarding the university.

The ministry had underestimated works and we

apologise, she said. We had hoped that the first enrolment would be in 2007 but have since realised that this is not an easy task.

Mbaakanyi said the first batch should comprise about 2 500 students but that the number was expected to increase fourfold by 2016.

She said a 1 700-hectare plot had been identified in Khurumela ward. The government had set aside P62.5 million as start-up capital.

However, she said, that in line with government plans, the public/private partnerships would take over the project.

Mbaakanyi then introduced the project implementation team headed by coordinator Badumetse Hubona, explaining that the team has already begun business.

Also, she said the university's founding vice chancellor would soon be appointed. The assistant minister pleaded with residents to cooperate with government to ensure success. She also urged Batswana to prepare for the university to improve their livelihoods.

You should be preparing for business opportunities by providing, among other things, accommodation and transport so that you have an input in the economy of the country, she said.

Though the project would create employment and business opportunities for locals, Mbaakanyi cautioned about the anticipated repercussion such as relocation of some people and an increase in the crime rate.

She however assured those whose property would be affected by the project that government would compensate them accordingly.

She said the ministry would be encouraging students to enrol for science and technology courses and

pleaded with parents to preach the same to their children.

With this, she said, Botswana would be walking in the same lane as other developing and developed countries since the world currently revolved around technological and scientific innovations.

Mbaakanyi also announced that the government is currently in the process of taking over brigade centres and to eventually turn them into technical colleges.

In addition, she said, a site had been identified for the proposed medical school near the University of Botswana, which would also serve as a referral hospital.

Albert Paki, a Serowe resident, urged the Ministry of Lands and Housing to provide plots for Botswana to build houses, as an investment while Cllr Michael Motshidi requested the government to give citizens priority over foreigners when awarding tenders for the project.

Cllr Chilume Balopi welcomed the development, saying economic empowerment was important.

We cannot attain economic diversification if there is no empowerment, he said. BOPA

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